



**For Immediate Release  
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**MASSACHUSETTS STATE PARK RANGER HONORED WITH SILVER MEDAL IN  
RESERVE AMERICA'S 2007 RANGER OF THE YEAR COMPETITION**

BOSTON—In a ceremony at the State House today, Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) Commissioner-Designate Richard Sullivan joined State Senator Edward M. Augustus, Jr., State Senator Stephen M. Brewer, State Representative Anne M. Gobi and State Representative John J. Binienda, and representatives of the Friends of Otter River State Forest to honor Lisbeth “Betsy” Cormier, Park Interpreter of Otter River State Forest in Baldwinville and Lake Dennison State Recreation Area in Winchendon. Cormier has been awarded a Silver Medal in America’s 2007 Ranger of the Year competition by ReserveAmerica.

As the nation’s premiere campground reservation system, ReserveAmerica presents one Gold Medal and five Silver Medal awards each year. Visitors to more than 3,000 national and state parks campgrounds across the country vote for the park ranger who they feel should be recognized, based on their dedication to preserving and protecting public lands, their courageous spirit and unwavering character, and for being a knowledgeable and compassionate professional.

“This marks the second consecutive year that a DCR Ranger has been honored with a Ranger of the Year award,” said Sullivan. “This is a testament to both Betsy’s and the DCR Bureau of Ranger Services’ outstanding commitment to professionalism. I am very proud to have DCR Rangers like Betsy representing our agency in the field.”

Cormier has had a long history with Otter River State Forest. As a child, she spent summer weeks camping with her family at Otter River, even taking her first steps there. Today, you can still find her at Otter River, as well at the Lake Dennison facilities during the summer months. This marks Cormier’s tenth year as the Park Interpreter for Otter River State Forest and Lake Dennison State Recreation Area. During the winter months, she works at Leicester Memorial School teaching natural history after school programs to 3rd, 4th, and 5th grade students.

“As Massachusetts is home to the first public park, I’m so pleased that Betsy is receiving national recognition for preserving and protecting public land in the advancement of our historical legacy,” said Senator Augustus. “Betsy’s enthusiasm towards ensuring the public enjoyment of the outdoors and the Commonwealth’s natural wonders have been exemplary and I’m so proud to represent a public servant of her caliber in the Massachusetts Senate.”

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS · EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

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Ian A. Bowles, Secretary  
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Priscilla E. Geigis, Acting Commissioner  
Department of Conservation & Recreation

“I’m very thankful for the work Betsy does,” said Representative Gobi, “especially with teaching children to be responsible environmentalists. She does a fantastic job.”

“I am thrilled to have the opportunity to honor the Rangers who have devoted their time and energy into improving the experience of visitors to our local parks. Betsy's devotion to the Otter River Interpretive Nature Center has made her a true asset to the community and more than deserving of this recognition,” said Senator Brewer.

Known for her positive energy and charming personality, Cormier has built a strong rapport with campers in both the summer and winter seasons. Many returning campers often ask “Is Betsy here?” when they arrive. Her interpretive programs, especially her Smokey Bear birthday parties and Birds of Prey program, have won recognition from park patrons and colleagues alike. Additionally, she is responsible for the interactive displays and exhibits at the Otter River Interpretive Nature Center.

“I want to thank my fellow staff at Otter River and Lake Dennison for their support, and of course my District Manager, Joe Iagallo, who hired me back in 1998,” said Cormier. “But the real thanks must go to the campers and park visitors. They’re the reason we’re here, and it’s so rewarding to see them come back year after year. I’ve had the chance to get to know many families and see their kids grow up; that is such a joy.”

In 2006, DCR Ranger Les Perry of Shawme-Crowell State Forest in Sandwich was awarded the Gold Medal Ranger of the Year.

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**Photos are available upon request.**